



THE COLOR PURPLE Character Descriptions

The production staff of *The Color Purple* is seeking passionate, talented people willing to embody this heartfelt, tough, and meaningful story of self-discovery and power. Movement is an integral part of this story and as such we are looking for actors (especially in the ensemble) who can personify that part of the story. Movers, dancers, and acrobats are highly encouraged. We encourage performers of all gender identities, and body types to audition; please note that the genders listed below represent that of the character as they should be portrayed. This production will feature a cast size of 25+ adults (18+) with a few roles for younger actors (13+).

Celie: (African-American, 20s-30s): Drives the story. Vulnerable, spirited, introverted, mischievous, seemingly passive but not, has a deep, hard soul, believes that she is ugly, and has a sense of humor that is sometimes wicked. She is an observer.

Nettie: (African-American, 20s-30s): Celie's younger sister and her rock. Smart, adventurous, driven, and a devoted sister. Attractive, adventuresome, feisty spirit, maternal, more educated and knowledgeable than Celie.

Mister: (African-American, 30s-40s.): Like Celie, a deep well. Handsome, big, masculine, strong presence, dominating, capable of brutal behavior but also a victim in his own way. Gets his power for free. Married to Celie, he abuses her. He is in love with Shug. He transforms throughout the play.

Harpo: (African-American, 20s-30s): Mister's vulnerable, confused, good-hearted son. Represents the new generation. He marries the independent Sofia.

Sofia: (African-American, 20s-40s): Powerful warrior woman. Physically bigger but beautiful. Comfortable being large, great sense of humor, touching, vulnerable. Married to Harpo, she does not let anyone mistreat her.

Squeak: (African-American, 20s): Harpo's lover after Sofia leaves him. Although mistreated, she eventually undergoes a transformation, demanding to be called by her actual name, Mary Agnes, and starting a new life. She is of mixed ancestry. Attractive, sassy, fiery, strong-willed, unafraid to take anybody on, has a caring heart.

Shug: (African-American, 30s-40s): A popular singer, we meet her at death's door. Attractive, confident, dynamic, powerful, irresistible, but has a frailty, like a wounded animal. Her vulnerability is shocking later on. Both Celie and Mister love her.

Darlene, Doris, and Jarlene: (African-Americans 20s-50s)

A trio of busybody types who love to gossip about the people of their town; they comment on the action throughout the show; these are country folk who shimmers with an eternally earthy and spiritual wisdom.

***Ol' Mister:** (African-American 40s-50s). *Mister's father is a scathing, angry, selfish man who disapproves of his son and his relationship with Shug.*

***Pa:** (African American. 40s-50s) *An abuser and embittered man. He is father to Celie & Nettie, as well as father to Celie's two children, whom he abducts from Celie and gives away at birth.*

***Husbands of: Darlene, Doris, and Jarlene**

***Girl**

***Preacher**

***Church Soloist**

***Bartender**

***Buster**

***Chief**

***Guard**

***Grady**

***Daisy**

***Glodene**

***Odessa**

***Young Man**

***Adam**

***Olivia**

***Young Celie** (13-early 20s)

***Young Nettie** (13-early 20s)

***Young Adam** (13-early 20s)

***Young Olivia** (13-early 20s)

***Young Harpo** (13-early 20s)

Ensemble:

Field Hands, Sisters, Buddies, Townspeople, Tribe, Villagers, Royal Wives, African Wives, Olinka Children, and General Ensemble Singing

**Characters marked with * are also in the ensemble and may double roles as needed*

NOTE:

The Color Purple features onstage moments of sexual violence and aggression, consensual intimacy, and physical violence between characters as a part of telling this story. Moments of intimacy and aggression/stage combat will be choreographed collaboratively with the actors, Director, and Intimacy Director and/or Fight Choreographer to ensure that all actors feel confident and comfortable with the material. Please consider this carefully prior to auditioning. If you have questions, contact Director Will Gearing at willgearing@gmail.com.